

The Myth of the Talking-Head Traditional vs. Technology Supported Courses

Boise State University technical communications instructor Mike Markel challenges the idea that teaching a distance learning course requires a whole new pedagogy that substitutes an independent-learning, student-centered, empowering model for the old talking-head, teacher-centered, passive-student model. Markel says the notion that instructors in traditional classes spend most of their time lecturing is a myth; what they really do is help students organize information, help them with their projects, give students a chance to meet with their teams, and motivate the students. And that's exactly what needs to be done in a distance-learning environment as well. Everyone will lose if traditional and technology-supported forms of education are pitted against each other because conscientious instructors need to do the same thing, whether they offer distance education or classroom-based education. The goal should be to think continuously of what we are trying to accomplish in the teaching/learning process, and to orchestrate the particular techniques and resources in the best and most effective way to accomplish the complete set of specific educational objectives.

—Eduprise Web site 07-02-1999 eduprise/NEED-TO-KNOW
summary of “Distance Learning And The Myth Of The New Pedagogy,”
Journal Of Business And Technical Communication,” v13 n2 99.